

makes the Council an independent entity within the Executive Branch, to be chaired on a rotating basis by the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of Commerce. This is a change from the Executive Order, which called for the Council to be housed within the Department of the Interior and chaired by that agency. If the Council is to be a truly independent entity that can work with all federal agencies, this change is necessary.

Third, the legislation retains the duties of the Council as described by the Executive Order (including development of an updated National Management Plan), but it adds some new duties in order to give the Council more tools to use in coordinating federal programs. In particular, the Council must submit an annual list of the top priorities in several different areas related to addressing the threat posed by invasive species. The legislation also specifically calls upon the Council to work with federal agencies during the budget development and submission process in order to ensure that budget priorities reflect the priorities of the National Management Plan. The legislation also calls on the Office of Management and Budget to develop a crosscut budget of all invasive species efforts in the federal government. This is a necessary tool for the Council to coordinate efforts among the various federal agencies.

Finally, the legislation retains the existing Invasive Species Advisory Council to serve as an important contributor to the ongoing dialogue between the federal government and stakeholders to ensure that the federal government acts in the most effective way.

This legislation will help further the federal government's efforts to combat invasive species, and I urge all of my colleagues to co-sponsor this important legislation.

HONORING PETALUMA BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Petaluma Branch of the American Association of University Women for 50 years of community service. AAUW Petaluma has tirelessly advocated for equity for women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. With over 200 members, AAUW Petaluma has developed a variety of successful methods to promote their agenda.

In recent years, the AAUW Petaluma has been awarded the Silver, Gold and Platinum awards for excellence in recruitment, program content, success of their projects, and their overall positive energy by AAUW National.

Many of the programs sponsored by AAUW Petaluma are integral in bringing our community together. For example, mentoring and tutoring programs in the high schools involving adults and peers have helped build intergenerational relationships, and the All-Petaluma Schools Community Art Show and Art Train Docents have helped keep art programs alive in the community.

AAUW Petaluma's community involvement does not stop there. The group has organized

community forums on health and planning issues. They exemplify an organization truly giving back to the community. In fact, I recently had the privilege of attending a developing relationships and connections event.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor the American Association of University Women, Petaluma Branch as an organization that has for the past half-century contributed to the women, girls and community of Petaluma.

THANKING MR. ART NASH FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement in March of 2005, we rise to thank Mr. Art Nash for 26 years of outstanding service to the United States government, with the majority of it here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Art began his government career in 1967 as a soldier in the U.S. Army where he was trained as an electronics technician and served two years. After 10 years in the private sector he began his House career at the House Recording Studio's engineering department in 1980. For the next 24 years, Art has been an indispensable member of the television floor coverage crew, the Recording Studio tape room and maintenance shop.

Art has been described as a man of God who loves all people. His positive attitude has been his trademark and the term "detail man" best describes him. He has been an excellent teacher to his co-workers and all those around him. He has taken his time to do the job right or find an even better way. Service has been his greatest achievement. Whether it was during the long hours that the House was in session or working side by side with his co-workers, Art Nash has given his best.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Art for his many years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. We wish him many wonderful years in fulfilling his retirement dreams.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF ATASCOSA COUNTY APPRAISER EDDIE BRIDGE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of Atascosa County Appraiser Eddie Bridge.

Eddie Bridge is a hard working member of our community, helping to appraise real estate and personal property in Bee, Crane, Crockett, and Refugio Counties. He also spends his time consulting and assisting the staff members of Frio, Hall, Irion, Martin, Menard, and Starr Counties in both physical and statistical reappraisals. Starting off as a Valuation Consultant with Pritchard and Abbot in 1993, Mr. Bridge has many years of experience in his special line of work.

Mr. Bridge is a model of energy and commitment, often working from eight in the morning till nine in the evening. Despite his demanding schedule, Mr. Bridge still finds time for ranching and running cattle.

Eddie Bridge lives in Pettus with his wife of 24 years and his two children. Both of his children are Valedictorians and his son Edward II serves at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Our Nation is built upon the hard work and dedication of citizens like Eddie Bridge, and it is important to recognize the value of their daily contributions to both town and country.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the contributions of Atascosa County Appraiser Eddie Bridge.

HONORING OUR NATION'S YOUTH ON THE 10TH ANNUAL KICK BUTTS DAY, AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TOBACCO

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our nation's youth today on the 10th annual Kick Butts Day, an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use.

Over the past 10 years, our nation has made significant progress in reducing youth smoking rates. Young people themselves have played a major role in this success. We should be proud that we've reduced smoking rates among high school students by 40 percent since 1997, when smoking rates among youths peaked at an alarming 36.4 percent.

But we have more work to do. About 22 percent of high school students still smoke. Tobacco is still the leading preventable cause of death in our country, killing more than 400,000 people every year. On Kick Butts Day, we should commit to finishing the job of protecting our kids from tobacco addiction by supporting science-based tobacco prevention measures, strong deterrents to youth smoking, well-funded tobacco prevention and cessation programs, smoke-free air laws, and FDA authority over tobacco products and marketing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert in the RECORD the attached report by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids entitled "Ten Years of Kicking Butts: Reducing Youth Smoking in the United States." It is a valuable summary of the progress we have made in reducing youth smoking, the evidence that common sense solutions work, and the need still to redouble our efforts.

TEN YEARS OF KICKING BUTTS: REDUCING YOUTH SMOKING IN THE UNITED STATES—KICK BUTTS DAY 10TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

On May 7, 1996, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids held the first annual Kick Butts Day to focus the nation's attention on the serious and growing problem of youth tobacco use in our country. At that time, youth smoking rates had been rising alarmingly for several years, fueled by cigarette marketing campaigns such as Joe Camel and the Marlboro Man that appealed to youth and deep price cuts that made cigarettes more affordable to kids. In 1997, smoking

rates among high school students reached an all-time-high, with 36.4 percent of high school students reporting that they were current smokers.

As we celebrate the 10th annual Kick Butts Day on April 13, 2005, the picture is much improved. After nearly 10 years of hard work, our nation has turned the tide, and we are making unprecedented progress in reducing youth tobacco use in our country. By implementing scientifically proven solutions like tobacco tax increases, well-funded tobacco prevention programs and smoke-free air laws, we have reduced smoking rates among high school students by 40 percent since 1996.

Still, there is much work to be done. Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in our country, killing more than 400,000 people and costing the nation more than \$89 billion in health care bills every year. A quarter of all high school seniors still smoke, and another 2,000 kids become regular smokers every day, one-third of whom will die prematurely as a result.

Perhaps most troubling, a survey released March 31, 2005, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that our progress in reducing youth smoking has slowed considerably or stalled completely. The survey found no statistically significant change in either high school or middle school smoking rates from 2002 to 2004.

Public health experts have pointed to several reasons for this leveling off in youth smoking rates: While states have cut tobacco prevention funding by 28 percent in the last three years and the American Legacy Foundation has also had funding reduced for its effective, national truth® youth smoking prevention campaign, the tobacco companies have increased their marketing expenditures to a record \$12.7 billion a year—more than \$34 million a day. More than two-thirds of all tobacco marketing dollars is spent on cigarette price discounts and free cigarette giveaways that make cigarettes more affordable to kids, who are very price-sensitive.

The recent CDC survey is a wake-up call to elected leaders at all levels that we cannot take continued progress in reducing youth smoking for granted and must redouble efforts to implement proven measures to reduce tobacco use, including tobacco tax increases, well-funded tobacco prevention programs, and smoke-free air laws. It is also critical that Congress enact legislation granting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate tobacco products, including the authority to crack down on marketing and sales to kids. If we take these steps, our nation will continue to achieve significant reductions in youth tobacco use. If we fail to do so, the progress we have made is at risk and could even reverse.

This report summarizes the progress we have made in reducing youth smoking in the United States and the challenges that remain.

PROGRESS IN REDUCING YOUTH SMOKING, SAVING LIVES AND SAVING MONEY

High school smoking rates have been reduced by 40 percent since reaching an all-time-high in 1997—in 1997, 36.4 percent of high school students smoked; today about 22 percent smoke (source: CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Youth Tobacco Survey).

Youth smoking rates have been reduced among all vulnerable age groups. Since smoking rates peaked in 1996–1997, we have reduced smoking by 56 percent among eighth graders, 47 percent among tenth graders and 31.5 percent among twelfth graders (source: National Institute on Drug Abuse Monitoring the Future Survey).

These declines mean that there are roughly 2 million fewer high school kids smoking

than there would have been if smoking rates had remained constant.

These reductions in youth smoking will prevent 600,000 premature deaths due to smoking.

These reductions in youth smoking will save \$32 billion in tobacco-related health care costs.

SUCCEEDING BY IMPLEMENTING SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN SOLUTIONS

Our nation has succeeded in reducing youth smoking by implementing scientifically proven solutions, including tobacco tax increases, tobacco prevention programs funded with tobacco settlement and tobacco tax dollars, and smoke-free air laws that require all workplaces and public places to be smoke-free. We are making significant progress in implementing these solutions:

Cigarette Taxes—Forty-one states and DC have increased cigarette taxes since 1995, some more than once for a total of 79 separate cigarette tax increases. The average state cigarette tax has increased from 30.3 cents per pack on June 30, 1995, to 84.7 cents a pack (once all already approved cigarette taxes take effect July 1, 2005).

Smoke-Free Air Laws—In 1998, California became the first state to require all restaurants and bars to be smoke-free. Today, 10 states and 234 communities across America have strong smoke-free workplace laws. Seven states—California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island—have smoke-free laws that require all workplaces, including restaurants and bars, to be smoke-free. Three states—Florida, Idaho and Utah—have smoke-free laws that include restaurants, but not bars. Such laws now cover more than a third of the nation's population.

State Tobacco Prevention Programs—In 1996, only three states—Arizona, California and Massachusetts—had well-funded tobacco prevention programs. Today, 13 states do.

National Public Education Campaign—Another key factor in youth smoking declines has been the American Legacy Foundation's national truth® youth smoking prevention campaign. A study published in the March 2005 issue of the American Journal of Public Health found that declines in youth smoking accelerated after the launch of this campaign in 2000 and that there was a significant dose-response relationship between exposure to the truth® campaign's anti-smoking advertising and declines in youth smoking between 2000 and 2002, the period of the study.

DESPITE PROGRESS, CHALLENGES REMAIN

While our nation has made significant progress in reducing youth smoking, our work is far from done:

Tobacco use is still the nation's leading preventable cause of death, killing more than 400,000 people every year and sickening millions more.

Tobacco use costs our nation more than \$89 billion in health care bills and \$88 billion in productivity losses each year.

About 25 percent of high school seniors still smoke.

Every day, another 2,000 kids become regular smokers, one-third of whom will die prematurely as a result.

The tobacco industry is spending record amounts to market its deadly and addictive products. Since 1996, total tobacco marketing expenditures have increased by 144 percent to a record \$12.7 billion a year—more than \$34 million a day, according to the Federal Trade Commission's most recent annual report on cigarette marketing (for 2002). The tobacco companies spend more than \$23 to market cigarettes and other tobacco products in the U.S. for every dollar the states spend on programs to protect kids from tobacco. More than two-thirds of all tobacco

marketing dollars is spent on cigarette price discounts and free cigarette giveaways that make cigarettes more affordable to kids, who are very price sensitive.

While the tobacco companies have increased their marketing, the states have cut funding for tobacco prevention programs by 28 percent in the last three years (from \$749.7 million in Fiscal 2002 to \$542.6 million in Fiscal 2004). These cuts decimated some of the nation's most successful tobacco prevention programs, including those in Florida, Massachusetts and Minnesota. While more states have well-funded tobacco prevention programs today than 10 years ago, the bad news is that 37 states and DC are funding prevention programs at less than half the CDC's recommended minimum amount or providing no funding at all.

The progress of the past decade has shown that we have proven solutions to reduce tobacco use, including cigarette tax increases, well-funded tobacco prevention programs and smoke-free air laws. These solutions are the equivalent of a vaccine that protects kids from tobacco addiction and its deadly consequences. But like other vaccines, this vaccine must be administered to every generation of children. Otherwise, the tobacco epidemic will explode again, at great cost in health, lives and money.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MISS USA, CHELSEA COOLEY

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, on April 11, 2005, Miss North Carolina, Chelsea Cooley, won the Miss USA pageant. I congratulate her on this momentous accomplishment and want her to know that everyone in her hometown of Charlotte, NC, is very proud of her.

The Miss USA pageant is a competition where America's best and the brightest young women compete for the crown of Miss USA. It is truly a great accomplishment for Chelsea to have been crowned as the winner of this tough competition.

Currently, Chelsea is studying fashion marketing at the Art Institute of Charlotte. She listed that her dream job would be working as a buyer for Ralph Lauren. I have no doubt that she can achieve this, and many other, dreams.

Chelsea will now go on to represent the U.S. this May in the Miss Universe competition in Bangkok, Thailand. Chelsea's hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina, will again be cheering her on as will the whole country. We know she will represent us well and will do our country proud.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NEW BRAUNFELS CITY ATTORNEY CHARLES E. ZECH

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of City Attorney Charles E. Zech.

Charles Zech serves as the City Attorney for New Braunfels, Texas. He handles all aspects